

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 5, 9, 11 to 24, 27, 31 and 33 to 40 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An information distributing method using a cable line for digital broadcasting, comprising:

an identification step for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;

an obtaining step for obtaining data that should be printed for specific users;

a selection step for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on the identification information;

a generation step for generating, using said selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatus of the specific users from said obtained data that should be printed; and

a distribution step for distributing said generated print information to set-top boxes of the specific users via said cable line;

a notification step for receiving a print end notice from said set-top box; and

a management step for registering and managing the fact that said print information is distributed to the specific users in a distribution history if said print end notice is received.

2. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein said identification step identifies the type of said printing apparatus by recognizing a device ID of said printing apparatus to be notified by said set-top box via said cable line.

3. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein said set-top box transfers the distributed print information to the printing apparatus to be connected.

4. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 3, wherein said set-top box separates a print information portion from said distributed information and decodes it to original print information, and transfer said print information to said printing apparatus without displaying it on a monitor.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 1, wherein said cable line is a two-way broad band communication network;
said distribution step distributes said print information as distribution information together with broadcast information that should be outputted on a display to be connected to said set-top box of the user.

7. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 6, wherein distribution information is separated into said print information and said broadcast information in said set-top box, and said print information is transferred to said printing apparatus without being displayed on said display.

8. (Currently Amended) An information distributing apparatus for distributing information using a cable line for digital broadcasting, comprising:
identifying means for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;
obtaining means for obtaining data that should be printed for specific users;

selecting means for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on the identification information;

generating means for generating, using said selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatus of the specific users from said obtained data that should be printed; and

distributing means for distributing said generated print information to set-top boxes of the specific users via said cable line;

notification means for receiving a print end notice from said set-top box;
and

management means for registering and managing the fact that said print information is distributed to the specific users in a distribution history if said print end notice is received.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing information using a cable line for digital broadcasting, wherein the control program comprises:

an identification step for identifying a type of a printing apparatus to be connected to a set-top box of each user;

an obtaining step for obtaining data that should be printed for specific users;

a selection step for selecting a printer driver corresponding to said printing apparatus based on said identification information;

a generation step for generating, using said selected printer driver, print information that should be printed by said printing apparatuses of the specific users from said obtained data that should be printed; and

a distribution step for distributing said generated print information to set-top boxes of the specific users via said cable line;

a notification step for receiving a print end notice from said set-top box; and
a management step for registering and managing the fact that said print information is distributed to the specific users in a distribution history if said print end notice is received.

11. to 24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) An information distributing method of distributing print information via a cable network for a digital broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for transferring received print information to a connected printing apparatus, comprising:

a receiving step for receiving distribution information that should be distributed to a user designated by an information distribution server;

a generation step for generating print information based on said received distribution information for each user; and

a distribution step for distributing said print information generated for each user to said set-top box of the designated user utilizing said cable network;

a notice receiving step for receiving a notice of a processing result of said print information from said set-top box; and

an update step for updating a distribution history of said distribution information if a print end notice of said print information is received from said set-top box in said notice receiving step.

26. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 25, wherein said distribution step distributes said print information after scrambling it.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) An information distributing method according to claim [[27]] 25, further comprising:

a notification step for notifying said information distribution server that a notice cannot be sent to a user if a print error notice is received from said set-top box.

29. (Original) An information distributing method according to claim 25, wherein said information distribution server is a server of a bank that desires distribution of a use record as distribution information.

30. (Currently Amended) An information distributing apparatus for distributing print information via a cable network for a digital broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for transferring received print information to a connected printing apparatus, comprising:

receiving means for receiving distribution information that should be distributed to a user designated by an information distribution server;

generating means for generating print information based on said received distribution information for each user; and

distributing means for distributing said print information generated for each user to said set-top box of the designated user utilizing said cable network;

notice receiving means for receiving a notice of a processing result of said print information from said set-top box; and

update means for updating a distribution history of said distribution

information if a print end notice of said print information is received from said set-top box by said notice receiving means.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in an information distributing apparatus for distributing print information via a cable network for a digital broadcasting system to a user who has a set-top box for transferring received print information to a connected printing apparatus, wherein the control program comprises:

a receiving step for receiving distribution information that should be distributed to a user designated by an information distribution server;

a generation step for generating print information based on said received distribution information for each user; and

a distribution step for distributing said print information generated for each user to said set-top box of the designated user utilizing said cable network;

a notice receiving step for receiving a notice of a processing result of said print information from said set-top box; and

an update step for updating a distribution history of said distribution information if a print end notice of said print information is received from said set-top box in said notice receiving step.

33. to 40. (Canceled)